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ISLAMIC FOCUS

WISDOM in TESTS

GAZA

Inhabited for over 5000 years and
one of the oldest cities in the World



LEAVE YOUR
Legacy

Ahlan Wasahlan...

FROM THE EDITOR

Our feature article explores the rich history of the land called Gaza. Contrary to the narrative being promoted on western media outlets, Gaza is not some uncivilized backwater. We bring to light its 5,000-year-old history embellished with a tapestry of fascinating events. The remarkable resilience of the people in bouncing back from all the arrows of life makes for a thought-provoking read. Gaza's place in Jewish and Islamic teachings is also highlighted.

Amidst the devastating genocide being perpetrated by Israel against the hapless population of Gaza, we look

at some of the wisdoms of having to endure war and occupation. Ibn al Qayyim rahimahullah's treatise on suffering sheds much needed light on the approach a Muslim should adopt in the face of suffering.

The dark days being faced by the Muslims of Palestine, Syria and other parts of the world can very easily lead to an attitude of despair. We open the pages of history and show how similar dark days in the past became the springboard to victory. One such moment features the scholar Izzud Deen ibn Abdis Salaam. His story is one that inspires hope and motivation for us to leave a legacy and turn the

tables. The 13th century world of Arabia he inhabits is very similar to the modern one with fragmented leaders looking out for their own piece of the pie at the expense of the broader Muslim community.

Enjoy another issue of original articles designed to inspire, empower and strike a spark!

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Muhammad Badsha
(Moulana)

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WISDOM TESTSⁱⁿ

People see Muslims undergoing adversity and tests, while seeing non-Muslims in positions of power and with great wealth. Questions go through one's mind seeing the Palestinians for example going through horrific genocide for years on end while their enemies are enjoying economic prosperity and power. This can lead a person to think that goodness in this world is reserved for non-Muslims and only a fraction of it was given to the Muslims, and that Muslims will only enjoy goodness in the Hereafter.

This person might then interpret the verses of the Noble Quran which speak about victory for the Muslims to refer to the Hereafter only. When asked about the suffering Muslims undergo in the world, this person might rationalise it in one of two ways:

1 If he does not believe that there is any wisdom in this suffering, he will say that Allah ﷻ does what He wishes and cannot be questioned about His actions.

2 If he does believe that there is wisdom behind these actions of Allah ﷻ, he will say that this suffering is so that people may adopt patience and earn the tremendous rewards of the Hereafter.

Ibn al Qayyim rahimahullah says that both these approaches can lead to accusing Allah ﷻ of oppression. A person might cry out, "My Lord! What sin have I committed for You to do this to me!" It can lead to people thinking that by following Islamic principles their worldly life will suffer, they will face adversity and lose out on an easy life.

He goes on to list the approach a Muslim needs to adopt in the face of suffering:

1 When a Muslim is afflicted with a difficulty, he accepts the Divine decision and hopes for reward. If he is unable to do this, he adopts patience and hopes for the reward. This in turn lightens the pressure of the test. Each time he does this and sees the result of this approach it becomes easier to bear the subsequent difficulties.

2 When a Muslim is put through a test, it is in accordance with his level of faith and sincerity. He can bear such difficulties which would have been unbearable to anyone else. This is the kindness of Allah ﷻ for the Muslims that He only gives them trials which are well within their ability to bear and overcome.

3 The more love for someone becomes firmly embedded in the heart, the easier it becomes for the lover to endure harm and adversity

in pleasing his beloved. What then can give a Muslim more pleasure than going through a test from Allah ﷻ, who is his greatest object of love, to please Him?

4 The sinner and disbeliever gaining might and position comes with disgrace, scandal, and stigma even though it might not always be apparent outwardly. How many a wealthy person who attained his wealth through corruption ends up being hated? How many an affluent person who used his wealth in abusing others for his pleasure saw the scandal, once it is revealed, destroy his honour in the eyes of the public?

5 When a Muslim faces tribulation it is like a medicine which removes a disease. This disease, if it had to be ignored, would have destroyed him, or reduced his rewards and high ranks in the Hereafter. Trials extract

the disease and make a Muslim attain a perfect reward instead of one that is reduced. As a result, trials are a means of giving a Muslim ultimate well-being. It is for this reason that those who went through the severest of tests were the Prophets and then those closest to them. The Muslim goes through trials to such an extent that he ends up walking on the earth with no trace of sin.

6 Tests such as facing defeat at the hands of an enemy, or being persecuted by them is a natural, unavoidable part of life like extreme heat and cold, illness, worries and distress. These are part and parcel of living in this world. A world with evil separated from good, benefit from harm and delight from pain is only found in the Hereafter.

In Muslims facing defeat and being oppressed by their enemies lies great wisdom some of which are:

1 In defeat, a Muslim turns in humility to Allah ﷻ, humbling himself before Him, realising his dire need of Allah ﷻ and pleading in Dua. If Muslims were always victorious it could have led to them being arrogant. On the other hand, if they were always defeated, Islam would have never been established. In defeat, a Muslim turns on humility to Allah ﷻ.

2 If Muslims were always victorious and never defeated, it would have led to people accepting Islam for ulterior motives. And if Muslims were always defeated, no one would have wanted to accept Islam.

3 Allah ﷻ loves that His servant shows Him complete devotion in times of ease and difficulty. Therefore, the changes in circumstances serve to perfect this quality of servitude under all conditions. A sound body needs to experience both hot and cold, hunger and thirst, tiredness and hard work as well as the opposites. Trials are thus an essential part of allowing a Muslim to attain perfection.

4 Tests purify a Muslim. He attains the sublime rank of martyrdom having to go through the route of being killed by an enemy. They remove sins within a Muslim that

he might not have otherwise repented for.

5 Allah ﷻ created life and death, the heavens and the earth to test human beings. A Muslim must undergo these tests to prove that he is true in his claim of being loyal to Allah ﷻ or not.

6 Izz al Deen ibn Abd al Salaam adds that tests make us truly understand the value of the blessings of ease and well-being because blessings are never fully appreciated until one loses them.

ATTAINING the ULTIMATE GOAL

Ultimately, all this is a means of attaining the true goal of our existence. That goal is the love of Allah ﷻ, taking comfort in Him and desiring to meet Him with great eagerness. This is the essence of Islam and of our actions and desires. Knowing Allah ﷻ is the

greatest of objectives, worshipping Him is the noblest of actions, praising Him is the best of speech.

Izz al Deen ibn Abd al Salaam ﷺ writes that trials make us realise the greatness of Allah ﷻ and His overwhelming power, and they make

us realise our humility and devotion to Him. It makes us acknowledge that we belong to Allah ﷻ and are nothing but His worthless servants; that we will return to Him; and that we are completely subject to His decisions.

The Hadith informs us,

“By the One in whose Hand is my soul, the pious would show joy at the time when a calamity started as you show joy in times of ease.” [Ibn Majah]

The pious would show this joy because they knew there is no comparison between the hardship and the numerous fruits and benefits in return for enduring it. They knew

that the tests are like a bitter medicine which brings an amazing cure from sickness.

Challenges are a part of everyday life. They make us stronger and without

them life can become somewhat meaningless because we have nothing to compare the good times to.



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GAZA

The brutal genocide and massacres of Palestinians in Gaza and to a lesser degree in the West Bank which began on 7 October 2023 has dominated the news. In this article we explore certain aspects and insights into Gaza to gain a better appreciation of this land.

Gaza has a long and rich history. It is not some uncivilised, backwater place. It was inhabited around 5,000 years ago making it one of the oldest cities in the world. The name comes from Gazza which means fierce or strong, an apt name for the resilient people of the land. The Ancient Egyptians called it Ghazzat, a prized city, and the Muslim conquerors referred to it as Ghazzat Hashim in honour of the great grandfather of the Prophet ﷺ who is buried in the city.

The Ancient Egyptians ruled over Gaza for 350 years. The Persians also had control of it at some point and it prospered. The Philistines, an ancient people of the area, conquered it in the 12th century BC. The Hebrew Bible refers to it as the place where Samson was imprisoned by the Philistines and died. The Greeks under Alexander came next in the year 332. Gaza became a flourishing centre of Hellenistic teaching, philosophy, and Greek culture. The Roman period followed and it became an important city in the region especially after the destruction of Jerusalem. Gaza's Roman stadium was famed from Damascus to Alexandria.

In the year 250 Christianity finally reached Gaza. Jewish communities had also lived there from time to time. In fact, the myth of Muslims by default hating Jews is contrary to history. It was the Muslims who provided a refuge for Jews in Spain, and with its fall, in the Ottoman Empire. Gaza was no exception and Jews found a welcoming home in the city when Christian Europe was persecuting them.

In 638 Gaza was captured by the Muslim forces under Amr ibn al

Aas ﷺ as the first city to come under Muslim rule in Palestine. The people largely accepted Islam and adopted the Arabic language. Gaza became a centre of Islamic learning. Imam Shafi ﷺ was born in Gaza in 767. Even though his studies took him away never to return, he composed couplets showing his love for Gaza: I yearn for the land of Gaza. Given the opportunity, I would use its sand as an eye liner out of my love for the city.

The Crusaders came in 1100. All the while Gaza continued to be a prosperous city as witnessed by the traveler Idris in 1154. Salahuddeen ﷺ liberates it for Islam in 1187. There comes a period where Gaza goes through many types of tests. In 1260 the Mongols destroy it. The Mamluks rebuild it with Sultan Baibars endowing the library with 20,000 manuscripts in the 13th century. In 1294 an earthquake strikes the city, in 1299 the Mongols return and destroy it once again. Yet Al Dimishqi in 1300 describes it as a beautiful city rich in trees such that it looks like a cloth of brocade laid out. In 1342 the Bubonic Plague killed most of the inhabitants. In 1355 the traveler Ibn Battuta describes it as a large populous city with many Masjids.

The Mamluk rulers had built Masjids, colleges, hospitals and public baths. They allowed the Jews to return after the Crusaders had expelled them. The Jews prospered under Muslim rule becoming the 3rd largest Jewish community in Palestine. Jews lived as citizens under Muslim rule and were welcomed in the Muslim state. An Italian Jewish traveler spoke glowingly of the fruits of the city. Gaza bounced back from

all the setbacks thrown at it, a quality we see today in the resilience and heroism of the Palestinians.

In 1516 the Ottomans gained control. Under them, during the Ridwan Period, Gaza enjoyed a golden age becoming the virtual capital of Palestine. By the early 19th century, it even had a bigger population than Jerusalem. 1799 saw Napoleon and his French troops arrive. They capture Gaza and expel the Jews. Again, it was



the Christians and not the Muslims who persecuted the Jews. In 1839 the Bubonic Plague arrived once again.

In 1917 the British capture Gaza and the colonial period begins, first under the British, then under the Zionist Israelis. In 1948 Gaza was occupied by Egypt until it was captured by the Israelis in 1967.

The first Intifada or Palestinian uprising took place in 1987. Israel eventually withdrew all its troops and settlers from Gaza in 2005. In 2006 the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas won victory in elections and have controlled Gaza since then. Gaza faced continuous Israeli attacks in 2008, 2012, 2014 and now in 2023/2024.

What was Gaza before the latest round of attacks?

Over 90% of kids over the age of 10 are literate with over 140,000 enrolled in schools. In 2006 there were 210 schools, and over 20,000 students enrolled in four universities. The public library had 10,000 books.

What is the Zionist and Jewish stance on Gaza?

According to Jewish law Gaza belongs to Biblical Israel or the so-called promised land. Rabbi Jacobs stated the obligation of Jews to live in Gaza and an Israeli Prime Minister reiterated this view. Ilan Pappé, the Israeli historian in his book, *The Biggest Prison on Earth*, shows quite clearly that the Israeli government and public covet the West Bank and Gaza. In Gaza they are trying their level best to remove and expel the non-Jewish population as they did from the 1930's in the rest of Palestine and as they continue to do so today. Those who lived under South African Apartheid will recall the inhumane homeland system which is the mild form of the colonialism being practiced by Israel today in occupied Palestine.

In the West Bank, they started by bringing in illegal settlers, taking Palestinian land and dividing the communities with high fences and humiliating check points. The people of the West Bank actually regard Gaza as freer when compared to the indignities they have to endure. In the recent 2023/24 Israeli onslaught, the Palestinians in the West Bank are confined to their homes for days on end, with armed soldiers enforcing the curfew.

In Jerusalem, in the Muslim area of Mamilla, the Israelis desecrated a Muslim cemetery going back to the 7th century and removed the graves

at night so no one could witness it. They then surrounded the area with an electric fence to prevent Muslims from entering.

The human suffering and humiliating indignities the Palestinians have been facing since the founding of colonial Israel can fill volumes. Suffice to say that the current war did not start on 7 October 2023. It started with the Israeli Zionist terrorist gangs in the 1920's and 1930's.

The Israeli settler neighbourhoods are considered war crimes under international law. The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court of 1998 defines the transfer by the occupying power of its population into territories it occupies as indictable war crimes. These blatant violations of international law are a hallmark of the Israeli state since its inception.

Acquiring land by force after hostilities have ended is illegal. In this regard, Israel has violated the 2nd Article of the United Nations 1945 Charter. Settlements built on occupied land is a violation of the 4th Geneva Convention Article 19(6) (1949).

Even the most liberal Israelis consider the illegally occupied Palestinian territories as non-negotiable. At the end of the day, Israel effectively only considers 10% of Palestinian land as possible territory for Palestinian rule, and much of that is divided by settler areas and military bases. The United Nations and other international bodies are largely colonial bodies structured on rules designed to keep the former colonial rulers effectively in power.

Why have the Palestinians taken up armed resistance?

Acknowledgement needs to be made of the South African government's stance on the Israeli genocide. They

have not given in to western pressure and designated Hamas, the Palestinian resistance movement, as terrorists. We know full well that the West's definition of what constitutes terrorism is flawed. They called the ANC and Nelson Mandela terrorists. The South African government has taken Israel to the International Court of Justice on charges of genocide while having all to lose in the international arena.

While the western controlled media makes much mention of the Israeli hostages, it bears remembering that 700 Palestinian kids under the age of 18 from occupied West bank are prosecuted annually by Israeli military courts after being arrested, interrogated, and detained by the Israeli army. Throwing a stone is punishable by up to 20 years in prison. Since 2000, more than 12,000 Palestinian children have been detained by Israel. Who is the criminal here?

Together with killing to date (January 2024) over 10,000 kids in Gaza, the Israelis have arrested more than 200 children since 7 October 2024.

Over the last 50 years, more than 10,000 Palestinian women have been arrested or detained by the Israeli military. Is it then any wonder that the Palestinians are fighting back for their land, lives and dignity?

Hamas has Islamic principles as its ethos. Its armed wing, the Al Qassam Brigades, is named after Izzuddeen Abdul Qadir Al Qassam who led the resistance to Zionist and British terrorism and colonialism in the 1920's and 1930's. Al Qassam has a battalion called the Battalion of Huffaz, an elite fighting force all of whom are Huffaaz of the Noble Quran, are punctual on reading their Salaah in congregation, performing Tahajjud, etc.

What is the Islamic view of Gaza?

The Hadith of Tabrani states. "It is your duty to engage in Jihad. The best of your Jihad is in Ribaah (guarding the borders) and the best of your Ribat is at Asqalan (Ashkelon in occupied Palestine)." The early Muslims would use Asqalan interchangeably with Gaza.

The people standing firm on resistance are the select slaves of Allah ﷻ in His selected land (Palestine). (Tabrani) They are carrying out a heroic resistance which a superior army aided by other forces and armed with multi billion dollars' worth of cutting-edge military hardware is finding incredibly difficult to defeat.

What lessons can we take from this war?

1 "Do not lose heart or grieve, for you will have the upper hand, if you are true believers." (Noble Quran 3:139) Allah ﷻ has wisdom in how His plan will play out. The Israelites said to Musa alaihis salaam, on seeing the continued oppression, "We were persecuted before you came to us and after you have come to us." He said, "Perhaps your Lord will

destroy your enemy and make you rulers in the land, and then see how you will act." (Noble Quran 7:129) Musa alaihis salaam told them that true liberation, and not an immediate, short-term relief, would come after a period of extended persecution. The suffering of the Palestinians and their losses could well be components contributing towards the total liberation of Palestine, not just an undignified, humiliating cessation of hostilities.

2 Despite the western propaganda and official government stances, the people on the ground have largely come out in support of Palestine. Many American youth have taken to studying the Noble Quran to try and understand the faith that is driving the Palestinians. They are largely pro-Palestinian prompting calls by some US politicians to call for a ban on Tik Tok blaming it for indoctrinating the youth. The rates of people in western countries like Australia and the UK turning to Islam have increased with many citing the war on Palestine as a contributing factor.

3 Appreciate the stance of our government. The government of South Africa has taken a pro-Palestinian stance that most Muslims countries have failed to take, despite

having everything to lose. Sahaba ﷺ appreciated the refuge provided by the Christian king Negus of Abyssinia. Observe the political parties supporting Israel and its genocide and be guided on who to vote for in elections.

Palestine will be the setting for decisive battles close to Qiyamah.

Dajjal will ultimately meet his end at Lod in Palestine. We need to continue with awareness of the suffering of the Palestinians, campaigning and Dua for we do not know what effect these could have on the ultimate outcome. Economic boycotts are permissible and can be effective especially if done on a governmental level. Do not let a pro boycott stance let you look done on anyone else who has not made your choice.

Be informed.

Read the history of Israeli terrorism in Palestine in the works of the Israeli historian Ilan Pappé and others to read beyond the mass media narrative, as well as the impact Palestine has had on bringing people to Islam such as the biography of Lauren Booth, Finding Peace in the Holy Land.

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LEAVE *your* LEGACY

Through history, we see times where Muslims have been at a very low point. We had been in very, very dangerous, perilous situations where there seemed to be no way out of it. Quite similar to what is happening in Gaza and Palestine at the moment where they are being mercilessly crushed and slaughtered. But then there came a time, if you look back in history, where the hero of the moment stood up. And he turned back the tide and the Muslims once

again rise rose up.

Among those incidents was the liberation of Masjid Aqsa by Salahuddeen Ayyubi ﷺ. And then if you go forward about 70 odd years after that, the Battle of Ain Jalut which took place in Palestine, where the Muslims turned back the tide of the Mongol onslaught.

In this article we touch on the battle of Ain Jalut. When we read about these heroic

achievements, we seldom go behind the scenes to see what brought them to that point where they could end up serving justice, serving Islam and being on the right side of history. In this article we will explore the backstory of what happened behind the scenes at the Battle of Ain Jalut and some lessons which we can then implement within our lives, especially for Ramadaan, which is around the corner, for our lives in general, and for the situation in Palestine.

The story starts in the late 12th century in Syria where a youngster was born and goes on to become one of the great Islamic scholars. His name is Izzud Deen ibn Abdis Salaam. He was born about six years before the liberation of Aqsa and he went on to become a very prominent scholar. He is known as Sultan al Ulama, the leader, and the chief of the Ulama. He teaches in the Umayyad Masjid in Damascus.

When Salahuddeen concluded his battles with the Crusaders he signed some treaties with them, leaving them with a few portions of land in Palestine and Syria. He also divided up his kingdom amongst his sons with the purpose of them working together from their respective regions. After some time this system falls apart. Every ruler is looking out for his own piece of territory, looking to secure his power base. This is very similar to what is seen today in the Arab and Muslim world. Every country

is trying to hold on to its bit of power at the expense of the power of the Muslims collectively. With this infighting and bickering, the Muslims start losing their strength and eventually become the plaything for any enemy out there.

The ruler of Damascus Saalih Ismail does something treacherous. He forms an alliance with the Baron's Crusade in 1240. The Crusaders are coming in once again. He allies with Emperor Frederick II from Germany to get military help against his brothers in the Kingdom of Egypt. To achieve this, he gives away certain pieces of land of Palestine among them Gaza, N a b l u s , Bethlehem and to the outrage of the Muslim Ummah, he gives away Jerusalem as well. You can imagine he has undone what Salahuddeen achieved with so much effort and he gives it away to the Crusaders.

Luckily this time around Jerusalem did not stay long in the control of the Crusaders. The Khwarizmi from Persia liberated it for Islam from the Crusaders 3 or 4 years later.

Izzud Deen is a scholar who was employed by the state. He is going to be giving the Juma Khutba and needs to follow certain protocols as a scholar who is employed by the state. He gets onto the Mimbar, he does not wear the prescribed clothes that they told him to wear. He does not praise the king. He does not read the Khutba in the name of the king, which is the custom in the Muslim countries. And in fact, speaks

against this alliance with the Crusaders. You can imagine when he comes off, he is arrested and put into jail. Saalih Ismail is killed and Izzud Deen is then freed.

He goes on to Egypt where he is welcomed with open arms. He is a very pious personality. The king Najmuddeen makes him his right-hand man, his advisor. He becomes the Chief Justice in Egypt and is now giving rulings in Cairo. The years go by, and he becomes very popular

among the people. They love him. 20 or so years later the threat of the Mongols arises. In 1258 Baghdad is sacked and falls. The people are butchered. The Khalifa himself is killed. The Mongols come into Syria. They take the cities of Damascus and Aleppo. And now the way towards Palestine is opened. If they come through to Palestine and they are unchecked, then they will go

on to possibly take Makkah Mukarramah and Madinah Munawwarah.

Izzud Deen is now at an advanced age, yet he starts motivating the people for Jihad and to take up arms to meet the Mongol threat. He sends Ulama out to all the villages and the towns, and he stirs the people to take a stand against the threat that is imminent. The Mongols up to this point have never been defeated on the battlefield. You can well imagine that no one wants to take a chance against them as well. As Salahuddeen had done 70 years before taking the spirit of the Egyptians which led to

He does not read the Khutba in the name of the king, which is the custom in the Muslim countries. And in fact, speaks against this alliance with the Crusaders



the freeing of Jerusalem from the Crusaders, Izzud Deen now does the same. Egypt through history has been the backbone of the Muslims.

The people's spirits are stirred up and Sultan Qutuz is now in power. He hails from the Mamluks who have taken control. The Mamluks were previously slaves. They see that the Muslim rulers have become very weak and they come into the vacuum and take power. They come at a point where the Muslims need them the most, and they do a valuable service to Islam in many ways. They strengthened the Muslims and protected them against external threats. Sultan Qutuz says to the people that we need a strong ruler. Once the threat of the Mongols has been neutralized, you can take me out of power and elect whoever you want. The Mamluks are ruling over Egypt and eventually go on to rule over Syria and Hijaz. They now bring all the factions together. The critical ingredient in facing our external threats as a nation is that we need to be united. A united front is the only hope and an essential ingredient for the Muslims to see off any threats that are out there.

The stage is set. The factions are united. The people are all motivated for the jihad. The government officials and princes now discuss ways to get funds to equip the army. As with governments everywhere the first thing they suggest is to raise the taxes. Sultan Qutuz looks at Izzud Deen Ibn Abdus Salaam to see what he is going to say. Izzud Deen says, "My Prince. We want to win this war with the help of Allah ﷻ. We need His assistance to gain victory. To achieve this, we need to root out all the corruption that is within society. You people are princes running the government. You need to give back all the extra wealth and palaces you have amassed. Give back whatever jewellery your wives have taken from the treasury." One can imagine the outrage among the princes. Sultan



Qutuz knows that his focus is on one particular goal. He says we are going to do what Izzud Deen suggests. Everyone gives back all their excess wealth and deposits it with the government treasury.

defeat on the battlefield. The Mamluk army not only saves the lands of Islam, but even Europe from further onslaught of the Mongols. You can imagine the scene with this venerable scholar also standing on the battlefield. As they return, Sultan Qutuz is killed.

In this battle the Mongols face their first ever defeat on the battlefield.

Izzud Deen is 78 or 79 years old. He sees the sacrifice the rulers have made and says that he is ready to stand on the battlefield holding a sword himself on the frontline alongside his king, Sultan Qutuz. The Egyptians are all together, the public is inspired and the Egyptian army marches into the battlefield at Ain Jalut which is north of Jerusalem in 1260. In this battle the Mongols face their first ever

So he didn't really rule for much time, maybe about a year or so. What does Izzud Deen say on his passing? He says that if ever there was a ruler who was committed to justice from the time of Umar bin Abdul Aziz, this was the man. He felt great sorrow at his passing. Izzud Deen also does not live very long. About two years later, he also passes away.

This is the back story to this remarkable, heroic achievement. This battle of epic proportions which left its indelible mark on history. Let us take four lessons from it:

1. SACRIFICE The very first thing we need to look at to see true success in whatever we want to achieve is that we need to make some sacrifice for the sake of Allah ﷻ. These Mamluk rulers sacrificed the money that they had taken, their wealth, and their luxurious lifestyle. They made the sacrifice and the people together with them. If we want to see true success, and the maximum effect of our worship in Ramadaan or in whatever we are doing in our life, we need to start with sacrificing the sins within our life. Assess our lifestyles, and identify the sins we want to eliminate. The sin might be giving me great enjoyment and it is embedded in my life, but I am going to sacrifice it to maximise the benefits of my worship.

2. PERSONAL CONNECTION WITH ALLAH Together with this, we need to reaffirm our personal connection with Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ instructs the Prophet ﷺ, "When you are free (from collective services), work hard (in worship)." (Noble Quran 94:7) Once you have finished from the collective worship and looking after the community, bringing them towards Islam, assisting them, taking them towards Paradise, then you need to personally engage in worship of Allah ﷻ. The Prophet ﷺ's whole day was for the community at large, essentially an indirect act of worship. Now he is instructed that once you finish with this, engage alone, one-on-one, and stand and reaffirm your connection with Allah ﷻ.

Fansab in the verse means to tire yourself. We might not reach that level of sacrificing for worship like the pious people but what we can



do is set aside a set portion, every day for worship. Once you bind yourself to something, no matter how little it is, it starts becoming a sort of pressure upon you. If you do something occasionally, casually, whenever it's convenient, that's easy. Rather, set yourself the goal of daily reading extra two Rakaats of optional Salaah before you sleep for example. Some days you might come home and it's very late. You might not have read those two Rakaats. Forcing yourself to read now becomes a small sacrifice for Allah ﷻ. Dedicate a set portion of the Noble Quran to read every day no matter how little and it becomes a sacrifice of sorts for Allah ﷻ. Turn towards Allah ﷻ no

matter how we do it. This will bring about that sense of sacrifice for our connection with Allah ﷻ.

Allah ﷻ describes the characteristic of the personal worship, "and towards your Lord turn with eagerness." (Noble Quran 94:8) This eagerness with which we need to turn to Allah ﷻ means that we need to show passion and devotion in our worship of Him. How many of us spend even a few moments in our day in Dua and asking from Allah ﷻ. We need so many things in life so we need to be constantly asking. Ibn Ataillah ﷺ says, "If Allah ﷻ gives you the opportunity and ability to make Dua and ask, it means that He wishes to

give you those things. If we have not made Dua for the day, how is it possible that we are going to get what you want?

3. BREAK THE EGO Thirdly, we need to break down our ego, our sense of self-importance. The Mamluks found it very difficult as public figures to give back the money they had taken through corruption, yet they broke themselves down in the eyes of the public and success came from Allah ﷻ. We also need to break down all the sense of arrogance and self-importance that we might have. Set aside our personal issues to work together for the greater good of the community. If we are not concerned about who gets the credit as long as the Ummah benefits, there is no limit to what we will be able to achieve as a community. We need to bring ourselves down, humble ourselves to such a degree that we

put our pride aside and go to the Ulama and ask them the rulings of Islam. Ask them how do I live my life; how do I correct my life?

We should not be limiting our goals. The defeat of the Mongols, which seemed impossible to them, became a reality.



4. DREAM BIG The final component of the success story at Ain Jalut was to dream big, to have high aspirations. The Egyptians didn't just sit down and say it's not our problem, the rest of the world can suffer but we are quite safe. They looked at the greater good of the Muslims. They said no one has beaten the Mongols but it doesn't matter. We will take them on and gain victory. We need to dream big. We should not be limiting our goals. The defeat of the Mongols, which seemed impossible to them, became a reality. The defeat of the Mongols. Aim to be the next liberator of Aqsa and Palestine. You might be in the medical field. Aim to be the person who will find the cure for cancer. Those lawyers who were standing at the International Court of Justice, who would have thought while they were doing their studies that they would one day come on to the world stage to take the terrorist Israelis to account for the genocide that they are perpetrating in the land of Palestine. So don't ever restrict ourselves in our dreams. Dream big.

At Ain Jalut, after all these combinations of things came into place, Allah ﷻ put the right king, at the right time, with the right advisor, at the right moment, the window of opportunity opens and they left their mark on history. We can do the very same if we put this plan into place. We can achieve things that we might not have dreamed ever possible. Ibn al Jawzi ﷺ says, "Fly high with the wings of hard work to gain the high towers of Paradise." Work hard, exert yourself dreaming of the ultimate pleasures of Paradise and its fabulous upper levels, not just for the lower levels.

HADITH

VERIFICATION SERIES 14

In this series we bring you a selection of topics from hadithanswers.com



A WAY TO PROTECT ONESELF FROM DEMENTIA/ ALZHEIMERS

Question: Could you provide me with a reference for the following:

أبقى الناس عقولا قرأوا القرآن

Answer: Imam Abu Bakr ibn Abi Shaybah رحمه الله has recorded this narration on the authority of 'Abdul Malik ibn 'Umayr, a Tabi'i [Demise: 136 A.H.] who said: "It used to be said: "The mind of those who recite Quran [frequently] will remain [in a healthy state] for the longest period of time."

(Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah: 30577. Also see: Shu'abul Iman: 2452)

Imam Abu Bakr ibn Abid Dunya رحمه الله has recorded this narration as the statement of 'Abdul Malik ibn 'Umayr رحمه الله.

(Al 'Umru wash Shayb: 80)

And Allah ﷻ Knows best.

FASTING WHILE TRAVELLING

Question: What is the reference for the following words:

إن شئت فصر وإن شئت فأفطر

Answer: : Imams Bukhari and Muslim (rahimahumallah) have recorded this Hadith.

Sayyidah 'Aishah (radiyallahu 'anha) reported that Sayyiduna Hamzah ibn 'Amr al Aslami (radiyallahu 'anhu) asked Nabi ﷺ, "Should I fast while travelling?" (He would fast very often) Nabi ﷺ replied, "You may fast if you wish and if you wish do not fast."

(Sahih Bukhari, Hadith: 1943 and Sahih Muslim, Hadith: 1121 with variation in the wording).

Note: When it comes to obligatory fasts, a person is still obligated to make up for the missed fasts (qadha) later. This is explicitly stated in the Quran by Allah ﷻ, outlining the requirement of qadha fasts for the traveler.

(Surah Baqarah, Ayah: 184)

And Allah ﷻ Knows best.

THE BLESSED SEHRI IN RAMADAAN

Question: Is this an authentic Hadith:

هلم إلى الغداء المبارك

Answer: :Yes, Sayyiduna 'Irbad ibn Sariyah (radiyallahu 'anhu) reported that Rasulallah ﷺ once invited him to partake of Sehri in Ramadan and said, "Come to the blessed morning meal."

(Sunan Abi Dawud, Hadith: 2337)

Imam Ibn Hibban رحمه الله has declared the Hadith authentic (sahih).

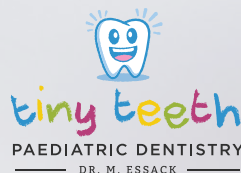
(Sahih Ibn Hibban; Al Ihsan, Hadith: 3465)

A similar narration is recorded on the authority of Sayyidah 'Aishah (radiyallahu 'anha).

And Allah ﷻ Knows best.



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[Musnad Ahmad, Vol 4, pg 148]

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